SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, as I said, this information has to be collected from each Ministry. Each Ministry has its own rules and procedures for filling up posts. Sometimes it is a long drawn out process because it has to go to the UPSC, sometimes to the Staff Selection Commission. I won't be able to say how many posts have been actually filled by each Ministry or Department. I am sure if the hon. Member puts the question in respect of any particular large Ministry or Department, the Minister concerned will be able to say or the Department of Personnel will be able to say how many posts have been filled. On my side, I am looking at it as an expenditure control measure and my effort is to ensure that the posts identified for abolition are abolished and they do not appoint more than what is permitted by the Government to be filled up.

श्री सभापति: नेक्स्ट क्वेश्चन श्री गोयनका।

श्री मोती लाल वोरा: माननीय सभापति जी, मुझे एक प्रश्न और पूछना है।

श्री सभापति: अब क्वेश्चन खत्म हो गया।

श्री मोती लाल वोरा: सभापति जी, मुझे एक प्रश्न और पूछना है।

श्री सभापति: आप अब इनसे जाकर बात कर लीजिए।

Review of Energy Security

*85. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed the escalating threats to energy security of the country posed especially by the emerging problems of crude oil shortage and high prices;

(b) if so, the details of intensive studies undertaken, if any, and holistic policy and alternative solutions worked out;

(c) whether Government have also reviewed the proceedings of the Peak Oil Conference held recently in Berlin,wherein the Association for the Study of Peak Oil has made some grim predictions, on the diminishing world oil reserves and the rising price of crude, reaching phenomenal $ 182 a barrel; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR) : (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House:

Statement

(a) and (b) While international crude oil prices have been quite high during the current year, domestic refineries have not faced any shortage of supplies in the international market. During the first half of 2004-05, domestic refineries have imported 12.7% higher quantity of crude oil compared to the corresponding period of last year, albeit at higher prices. The average price of the Indian Basket of crude oil during the period April-November 2004 has been $ 37.62/barrel compared to $ 27.98/barrel during 2003-04.

With a view to enhancing oil security of the country, the following measures have been taken:

(i) Increasing exploration efforts through the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP); under the four rounds of NELP, Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) have been signed for 90 blocks.

(ii) Exploring in new areas, especially in deepwater and difficult frontier areas, as also explore in the deeper layers of the producing fields.

(iii) Developing faster the newly discovered fields and to step up the use of new technologies for seismic surveys, work over, stimulation operations, drilling of wells etc. in producing areas.

(iv) Improving the recovery factor from existing major fields by implementing Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)/Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) schemes; in particular Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has taken up 15 fields for this purpose at an estimated investment of Rs.10,000 crore, which would also help in accelerating oil production from these fields.

(v) Acquiring acreages abroad.

(vi) Tapping alternative sources of energy such as Coal Bed Methane (CBM), Underground Coal Gasification (UCG) and gas hydrates, and

(vii) Substituting fossil fuels in part by blending with renewable fuel like ethanol and bio-diesel.

(c) and (d) Government keep under review available information on prognostic crude oil availability and prices. The proceedings of the Association for the Study of Peak Oil (ASPO) conference in Berlin have been brought to the attention of the Government as one of several such conferences/workshops held around the world. It is confirmed that one expert was of the view that crude oil could reach $182 a barrel, but there are several other authoritative views on this.

श्री आर० पी० गोयनका: सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी से दो सवाल पूछना चाहता हूं। पहला तो यह है कि मणि शंकर जी हमेशा एमआरटीपी के खिलाफ रहे हैं। यह बहुत अच्छी बात है। मैं उसके खिलाफ नहीं बोल रहा हूं। लेकिन ओ० एन० जी० सी० जैसी संस्था को सारे माइनिंग राइट्स, एक्सप्लोरेशन राइट्स दे दिये गये हैं। अब उनके पास इतने राइट्स हैं कि वे इसको दस-बीस साल में पूरा नहीं कर सकेंगे। अगर तेल की इतनी कमी है तो इसके राइट्स दूसरों को क्यों नहीं दिये जाते हैं? यह पहला सवाल है।

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, on a point of personal explanation, far from being against the MRTP, I was the Private Secretary to the Minister of Industry who brought in the MRTP legislation. I am, therefore, very sorry to see a historic contribution that I made 34 years ago drifting into history. Sir, with regard to ONGC's rights, the fact of the matter is that almost all exploration in this country has been done by ONGC, but we have given the right to ONGC now, as a corporation to explore the possibilities either of giving up its rights, as they have, for example, done with regard to the Amguri fields in Assam, or entering into joint ventures. So, if Shri Goenka has parties in mind who might be able to do a better job than ONGC is doing on its own, he is most welcome to introduce them to ONGC and we will, certainly, urge ONGC to be much more alert to the energy security requirements of this country than to sit like 'a dog in the manger' on any particular licence they have.

श्री आर० पी० गोयनका: सभापति महोदय, मैं यह नहीं कहता हूं कि बैटर जॉब है या खराब जॉब है। मैं इस बात में नहीं जाता हूं। यहां तो ओ० एन० जी० सी० इतना काम ही नहीं कर पायेगी, फ्रॉम नथिंग टू समथिंग। मेरा यह पाइंट मंत्री जी के लिए था। मैं दूसरा सवाल मंत्री जी से आपके माध्यम से पूछना चाहता हूं.. ।...(**व्यवधान**)...

श्री सभापति: आप सीधे ही पूछ लीजिए। ...(**व्यवधान**)...

श्रीमती जमना देवी बारुपाल: सर, सीधे सवाल पूछेंगे तो आप नाराज हो जायेंगे।

श्री आर० पी० गोयनका: नहीं सर। हम आपके माध्यम से ही सवाल पूछेंगे। जो जर्मनी की रिपोर्ट आपके सामने रखी गई है, उसमें दामों को एक सौ डालर से ऊपर बताया गया है। इसके बारे में आपकी क्या राय है?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, we have certainly seen this somewhat alarmist report of one expert in the Conference in Berlin having predicted that prices could go to 182 dollars. Sir, people who predict petroleum prices, like those who read the palm, have the right to give us various views. But, we are very carefully monitoring it through several different sources, for example, Petroleum Economics Limited, Fesharaki Associate Consulting and Technology Services, etc. Our own IOC is tracking it through Platts and Argus and various journals and what is happening on the Petroleum exchanges, in particular, the International Petroleum Exchange and the New York Mercantile Exchange, and the forward curves are predicted by leading fund managers such as Morgan Stanley, Barclays, ABN Amro, Bank of America, Citibank and others. Sir, I would just give one example of why we think the figure of '182' is, probably, somewhat fanciful. We have here the prediction of Petroleum Economics Limited which says that in 2020-25, they do not expect Dated Brent to be very much higher than 62 dollars, of Western Texas Intermediate to be 64 dollars and 70 cents, and for the Japanese Crude Cocktail, which is, perhaps, a little bit more relevant to us because it is an Asian buyer, to be as low as 54.65. So, as far as we are concerned, when we look at the Asia-Pacific Databook, we find that with regard to 2020, Arab Light is predicted to be selling at as little as 40.85, not tomorrow or day afterwards, but out in 2020. ...(*Interruptions*) ... And then the low case price forecast for these is: Arab Light at 25 dollars 70 cents in 2020; Brent at 27 dollars 50 cents; and WTI at 29 dollars 75 cents. ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is enough. ...(*Interruptions*)... That is enough. ...(*Interruptions*)... Shrimati Kum Kum Rai.

*86. [The questioner (SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI) was absent. For answer *vide* page 28 *infra*.]

हिमाचल प्रदेश में स्वां नदी का नहरीकरण

*87. श्री कृपाल परमार: क्या जल संसाधन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार ने प्रदेश के ऊना जिला में स्वां नदी के झालेड्रा पुल से संतोखगढ़ पुल तक 16.67 किलोमीटर लम्बे नहरीकरण के लिए 123.93 करोड़ रुपये का एक प्रस्ताव योजना आयोग की स्वीकृति तथा हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार की वित्तीय एवं प्रशासनिक स्वीकृति के उपरांत आर्थिक सहायता प्रदान करने हेतु 4 मार्च, 2002 को प्रेषित किया था;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उस पर क्या कार्रवाई की गई तथा इस मामले को अभी तक लंबित रखने के क्या कारण हैं;.और